

REMARKS

Present Status of Application

This is a full and timely response to the outstanding Office Action mailed on October 14, 2008. The Office Action objects to claims 1, 3-4 and 9-12 because of informalities. The Office Action rejects claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Babish et al. (US 2003/0108628, "Babish" hereinafter). The Office Action further rejects claims 1-3 as being unpatentable over Babish in view of Meybeck and Bonte (US 6,716,800, hereinafter "Meybeck"). Additionally, the Office Action indicates that claims 9-12 are free of the art.

In response thereto, Applicants have amended claims 9-12 and cancelled claims 1, 3-4 to more clearly define the present invention. After entry of the foregoing amendments, claims 9-12 remain pending in the present application. It is believed that no new matter is added by way of these amendments made to the claims or otherwise to the application.

Applicant has most respectfully considered the remarks set forth in this Office Action. Regarding the obvious rejections, it is however strongly believed that the cited references are deficient to adequately teach the claimed features as recited in the presently pending claims. The reasons that motivate the above position of the Applicant are discussed in detail hereafter, upon which reconsideration of the claims is most earnestly solicited.

Claims 1, 3-4 and 9-12 are objected to because of informalities.

In response thereto, Applicants have amended claims 9-12 according to the Examiner's suggestions. Withdrawal of the objections is respectfully requested.

The Office Action has rejected claim 1 as being anticipated by Babish.

The Office Action has rejected claims 1-3 as being unpatentable over Babish in view of Meybeck).

In response thereto, Applicants have cancelled claims 1, 3-4. Accordingly, the rejections to these claims are now rendered moot. Since claims 9-12 are free of prior art, Applicants respectfully submit that the now pending claims are in condition of allowance.


CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is believed that all pending claims are in proper condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference would expedite the examination of the above-identified patent application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned.

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Respectfully submitted,
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